### What to ask before buying a DR monitoring application

<table>
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<th>Issue</th>
<th>Questions to ask/Key points to consider</th>
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| **General**                   | • What do you want to monitor?  
  • What information do you want to collect? Is it for the entire IT environment (on-site and off-site) or just parts?  
  • Who will use the monitoring systems?  
  • Will the system work in a virtualized environment?  
  • Is output only data or data analyzed against metrics?  
  • Can system find dependencies and other relationships, single points of failure and any other weaknesses before mapping them to your requirements?                                                                                                                                                           |
| **Existing IT environment**   | • Define a “normal” operating environment.  
  • Do you want software to look for all possible risks?  
  • Is just flagging unknowns enough?  
  • How will the monitoring tool integrate with daily operations?  
  • What data and parameters are essential for optimal knowledge of the backup environment?  
  • Does the tool replace or complement existing monitoring apps?  
  • Can existing monitoring systems be adapted, modified or upgraded to support DR monitoring capabilities?                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| **Integration into DR plans** | • What results are required to support the DR plan?  
  • Define the data you’ll need prior to conducting an exercise.  
  • Can the DR monitoring system replace DR exercising? How will it supplement exercises?  
  • Do overall backup strategies need to be changed with the introduction of DR monitoring tools?                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| **Cloud-based technologies**  | • If you use cloud storage services, how should the DR monitoring system integrate with them?  
  • Will the system operate outside data center boundaries? Will it be used to monitor external applications?  
  • Will DR monitoring tools enhance the value of cloud services?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| **Network**                   | • Do DR monitoring systems have to examine network infrastructures or are current systems adequate?  
  • Will the system have to monitor VoIP systems or older PBX systems?  
  • Will the monitoring system be used for unified communications, call center environments or audio/videoconferencing systems?  
  • Will the monitoring tool provide performance and DR data across multiple communications environments?                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| **IT management**             | • Will the DR monitoring tool be used as part of a normal change management process?  
  • Are there any limitations related to the number and type of systems that can be analyzed by the DR monitoring tool?  
  • Conduct a risk analysis of what might happen if no DR monitoring applications were being used.  
  • Determine the return on investment of a DR monitoring application.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| **Outsourcing and managed services** | • If you use a third-party service provider (e.g., hot site firm, managed services vendor, outsourced data center) does the service offer DR monitoring as a value-added extra or fee-based service?                                                                                                                  |